

URGENT ACTION

WOMAN IMPRISONED FOR FACEBOOK POST

A 24-year-old woman in Myanmar has been sentenced to six months' imprisonment in connection with a Facebook post mocking the army. She is a prisoner of conscience, who must be released immediately and unconditionally.

On 28 December 2015, **Chaw Sandi Tun**, also known as Chit Tha Mee, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment by the Maubin Township Court, in Ayeyarwady Region, in the southern part of the country. She was sentenced under Article 66(d) of Myanmar's 2013 Telecommunications Act, which provides for up to three years' imprisonment for "extorting, coercing, restraining wrongfully, defaming, disturbing, causing undue influence or threatening any person by using any Telecommunications Network". Chaw Sandi Tun had also faced an additional defamation charge under Article 500 of Myanmar's Penal Code, however this charge was dropped by the court.

Chaw Sandi Tun was arrested on 12 October for a post she shared on Facebook, pointing out that opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi was wearing clothes of a colour similar to those of the army, and in particular Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. Her comment read: "If you love her [Aung San Suu Kyi] so much, put a piece of her longyi [sarong] on your head". In Myanmar's patriarchal society, the idea of a man wearing a women's clothes on his head is traditionally deemed to be offensive. She was arrested in Yangon, Myanmar's main city, and transferred to Maubin prison in Ayeyarwady Region, where she remains behind bars.

Please write immediately in Burmese, English or your own language:

- Calling on the Myanmar authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Chaw Sandi Tun;
- Urging them to ensure that, pending her release, she is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated; is not transferred to a remote prison; has regular access to family members and lawyers of her choosing; and is provided with any medical care she may require;
- Calling on them to repeal or amend all laws which impose arbitrary or sweeping restrictions on the human right to freedom of expression, in line with international human rights law and standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 FEBRUARY 2016 TO:

President

Thein Sein

President's Office

Office No.18

Nay Pyi Taw

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Fax: +95 1 652 624

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Home Affairs

Lt Gen. Ko Ko

Ministry of Home Affairs

Office No. 10

Nay Pyi Taw

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Fax: +95 67 412 439

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Chairman, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

U Win Mra

27 Pyay Road, Hline Township

Yangon

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Fax: + 95 1 659 668

Email: chmyanmarnhrc@gmail.com

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 228/15. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/2669/2015/en/>

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

WOMAN IMPRISONED FOR FACEBOOK POST

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

While Internet penetration is still very low in Myanmar, Facebook is widely used by most Internet users, including human rights defenders, government officials and news agencies.

Amnesty International is aware of several other cases where individuals have been charged for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of expression under Article 66(d) of the 2013 Telecommunications Act. Among them is Patrick Khum Jaa Lee, an ethnic Kachin peace activist, who was arrested on 14 October 2015 for a Facebook post mocking the Myanmar Army. He is currently detained in Insein prison in Yangon despite health concerns (see: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa16/3105/2015/en/>). Amnesty International is deeply concerned by these cases which may be signs of a broader crackdown on freedom of expression online.

The Myanmar authorities continue to arrest and imprison activists and human rights defenders simply for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression which is enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Amnesty International is concerned about a number of laws in Myanmar which restrict the right to freedom of expression.

Name: Chaw Sandi Tun

Gender m/f: f

Further information on UA: 228/15 Index: ASA 16/3134/2016 Issue Date: 4 January 2016